

# Spurgeon a New Biography #5

by C.H. Spurgeon

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*C.H. Spurgeon's ministry at the tabernacle exemplified leadership, community service, and a commitment to spiritual growth despite personal challenges.*

**Duration:** 1:32:46

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:36, Luke 15:4, 2 Corinthians 12:9

**Topics:** "Christian Ministry", "Evangelism"

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## Description

The video is a sermon transcript about the preaching of the word of God. The speaker describes his experiences in the dungeons beneath the castle of despair, which had a positive impact on his ministry. He emphasizes the importance of kindness and encouragement for those who are going through trials. The speaker also highlights the significance of bringing people to Christ and the active organization and activities of his church.

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## Transcript

The students called him the Governor, and some of the people used this term in its Old Testament form, the Tirshatha. The nickname well indicated his place. With the exception of the almshouses, each institution had originated under his influence.

He had planned its form of organization, and had overseen its growth, and his word was supreme in all its affairs. Nevertheless, throughout the whole movement, the matter of authority was not even considered. There was a spontaneous recognition of Spurgeon, and the relationship was one of his love for the people, and the people's love for him.

Under his example, they prosecuted the work with affection and fervor. He never exerted his authority, he never needed to, but the entire organization moved steadily forward in harmony, under his strong generalship. The tabernacle was a place of almost constant activity.

On each of the seven days of the week, the doors were opened at seven o'clock in the morning, and did not close till eleven o'clock at night, and there were persons coming and going all of the time. For twelve years, the college had held its classes in the lecture hall and the adjoining basement rooms, and even after the new building was constructed, the students were still in and out of the tabernacle with much frequency. The college also held evening classes twice a week, with some two hundred in attendance, and after shorthand was added to the curriculum, the figure increased to three hundred.

The tabernacle was a center for the various institutions' annual meetings, so many of them that one was held almost every week. The Ladies' Benevolent Society met there in a sewing circle to make clothes for the children of the orphanage, for poor people of the congregation, and for other needy ones of the area. The Maternal Society Ladies gathered to prepare gifts for expectant women, and from the tabernacle they went forth to assist them when they became mothers.

Flowers were gathered at the tabernacle by the Flower Society, and after being made into attractive baskets and bouquets, they were taken to the homes of the sick and to hospitals. Mrs. Spurgeon maintained a Bible nurse at her own expense, and other such nurses also functioned from the tabernacle. Outside organizations likewise made use of the tabernacle from time to time.

The Bible Society, the Baptist Union, several missionary societies, and other such groups often were allowed the Great Building for some special occasion. A large number of meals were served at the tabernacle. Until the opening of its own building, the college had dinner for its men there, and during the pastors' conferences and the annual meetings of various organizations, meals were served, sometimes three a day.

Thus there was the frequent arrival of carts carrying food, and a large amount of work was done in preparing and serving it, and in setting and waiting on tables and washing dishes. Once a year, the 1600 members of the Christian Butchers Association held their annual meeting at the tabernacle. When we read of them eating a supper of roast beef, we wonder whether they brought this immense supply of meat with them already cooked, or whether it had to be cooked on the premises.

At any rate, they held a rousing meeting of testimonies and preaching after they had eaten their meal. When in 1898 the building was destroyed by fire, the blaze began in a kitchen chimney that had become overheated during the cooking of a meal for a conference. Although the tabernacle records make no mention of it, the task of keeping the building clean and tidy must also have demanded much labor.

Spurgeon required that everything in the Lord's work be done well, and he allowed nothing to be let go in a careless manner. Since he found part-time employment for students whenever possible, it is possible that a group of them was given this large janitorial duty. But the chief labor in connection with the tabernacle was spiritual.

A number of members, after attending the morning service, filled the rest of the day with work for the Lord. The Sunday school met in the afternoon. It was a fervent institution with well over a thousand boys and girls in attendance and something like a hundred teachers.

Many of those who taught must have been truly devoted to their task, but we notice especially the work of one of them. Back in the days when Spurgeon first came to London, Mrs. Lavinia Bartlett took over a class of three girls at New Park Street. Under her leadership it made steady growth till inside of ten years it regularly numbered five hundred, and at times the attendance rose to seven hundred and more.

When the deacons or elders, or the messengers, interviewed a woman who was not clear as to the way of salvation, they advised her to attend Mrs. Bartlett's class, and by the time she was called home in 1875, between nine hundred and a thousand members of her class had come to know the Lord. Spurgeon said of her, She aimed at soul winning every time she met the class. In pursuing this object she was very downright and treated things in a matter-of-fact style.

The follies, weaknesses, and temptations of her sex were dealt with very pointedly, and the griefs, trials, and sins of her class were on her heart. Her talk never degenerated into storytelling or quotations of poetry, but she went right at her hearers in the name of the Lord and claimed their submission to Him. Other classes at the Sunday School did not become as large as that of Mrs. Bartlett, but the same purpose largely characterized them all.

On Sunday afternoons and evenings, large numbers of the tabernacle people were busy for the Lord at other places. Several assisted the college students, some of whom were in well-to-do areas, while others labored in more ordinary districts. Still others were working in the slums, and in those locations conditions were usually deplorable.

For instance, the student, together with his helpers from the tabernacle, regularly visited the inhabitants of lodging houses, sites of terrible poverty, iniquity, and sorrow, or held a meeting in a room where the air was foul and vermin abounded. From such scenes they came away with their clothes carrying the noxious odor, but their hearts rejoicing in the privilege of witnessing for Christ to such needy souls. Spurgeon encouraged his people to be out carrying the gospel on Sundays.

During his career, he frequently arranged to have a group of members leave the tabernacle to start a new church, and often one of the prominent men of the tabernacle went with them to provide leadership. One man who led in the founding of such a mission work was J. T. Dunn. For a time, Mr. Dunn had served as Spurgeon's assistant, doing pastoral visitation and secretarial duties.

But in 1869, with Spurgeon's blessing, he launched out upon an effort in a poor district. The building was an old shed, and he began with four boys whom he invited in off the street, sitting them on two scrubbed wooden benches. A candle stuck into a teapot spout served as a source of illumination.

The neighborhood was populated with a great many fish curers, the children helping in the business. The building was of such a low pitch that the room used was frequently named the Black Hole of Calcutta by Spurgeon. Many of the children were far from clean, and the atmosphere often resulted in women teachers being taken out into the street to revive them from a fainting fit.

But Mr. Dunn continued his effort. He moved the mission to another building, but here rain came through the roof and rats ran across the floor. Nevertheless, he saw some of the scholars converted and baptized at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and then became Sunday school teachers themselves.

Others learned to preach in the open air, and some were trained in Spurgeon's College for the regular ministry. In 1874, there were 500 children and young people in regular attendance on Sundays with 50 teachers. J.T. Dunn remained an elder of the Tabernacle during all the years he led this mission work.

He undoubtedly was present at the Tabernacle for its Tuesday and Thursday evening meetings, and also on Sunday morning. But on at least one or two weeknights, and on Sunday afternoon and evening, he was engaged in the activities of the mission. Those duties, besides his work at making a living, must surely have given him a very busy life.

This pattern was that in general of the elders and deacons of the Tabernacle. Several of them were engaged in activities of this nature. William Olney, whom Spurgeon termed Father Olney, had been Spurgeon's chief assistant until his death in 1870, but his four sons carried on his labors.

William Jr. began a meeting in a men's club room in Bermondsey, an area much better than that of Mr. Dunn, and he used the men of his Tabernacle Bible class as his helpers. He preached each Sunday evening, did open-air work, engaged in tract distribution, and conducted a weekly prayer meeting. After ten years, the work had grown to such an extent that a fine new building was erected, and in reference to Spurgeon's middle name, it was called Haddon Hall.

Like Dunn, while doing this excellent work, Olney remained a deacon of the Tabernacle and well fulfilled his office there. It seems that nearly every officer of the Tabernacle had also a second labor. Each instructor at the college was also the pastor of a church and found time to perform both duties.

James Spurgeon carried a constant load as co-pastor of the Tabernacle, yet he also started a work in the London suburb of Croydon, and under his ministry it became a church of hundreds. Much more might be said about the duties and double duties performed by members of the Tabernacle. As Spurgeon remarked, the Tabernacle was like a hive of bees, and for the vast majority of its people to be a member meant to live a very busy life.

In all this endeavor, Spurgeon was the motivating figure. His own days were so full that it is difficult to credit the amount of work he accomplished. Something of the orderliness and abundant activity that characterized his organization is manifest in the following report made by an American journalist.

Speaking of his visit to the pastor's college, he wrote, as the annual church meeting was to be held in the evening. A secretary, with two clerks under him, formed the staff required for conducting the correspondence. In another room was a man up to his eyes in books, whose business it was to manage the coal portage, while in yet another was a sort of local moody's where boxes of books were packed and sent to former students now pastors in outlying chapels.

Over this labyrinth I was conducted in the most cheery way by the atlas, who bears on his single pair of shoulders the whole mass. And this is the man whom we are too apt to regard as merely the preacher on Sundays. Mr. Spurgeon, I could not help saying, you are a regular pope.

Yes, he replied, though without claiming infallibility. This is indeed a democracy with a very large infusion of constitutional monarchy in it. End quote.

Deacon Olney, in speaking at Spurgeon's Jubilee in 1884, made the statement that on Sunday evenings the number of tabernacle people who were out conducting meetings amounted to at least a thousand. This is an amazing fact, but even more amazing is that, commencing with 1870, Spurgeon began every three months to ask all members to remain away from the evening service on the following Sunday, since by filling the tabernacle they were preventing the unconverted from getting in and from hearing the gospel. His people cooperated, and on the Sundays they were absent.

The building was more crowded than ever, as thousands who did not know the Lord feeling that this time they would probably get in came with much enthusiasm. Nothing delighted Spurgeon more than to have a great host of the spiritually needy to preach to, and those occasions, rare indeed in Christian history, were times when many believed on Christ and were later baptized. Many of the tabernacle people seldom went out of the section of London south of the Thames.

The homes of a vast majority of them lay in that general district, and so did their places of employment. For instance, several worked for Sir Henry Doulton, whose factory, manufacturing the famous Royal

Doulton chinaware and figurines, was in that area. Sir Henry was an earnest Christian who regularly attended Spurgeon's ministry, and he employed a large number of tabernacle people.

The affections of the members were entwined around the tabernacle and its activities. The services of many a church may prove boring, but not so those of this great church. With grand delight, people went up, from what was often the drudgery of daily life, to the House of the Lord on Sunday mornings and Sunday evenings, and at least two evenings of the week, and there their hearts were lifted, their minds informed, and their souls inspired.

Many of the women were there again at various hours of the day, preparing meals or sewing garments for the orphans, and many of the young men were at the tabernacle in the evenings, gaining an education or learning something more about doing the Lord's work. For hundreds of persons, the tabernacle was the center of their existence. The message they heard there had been the means of transforming their lives, remaking their homes, saving them from sin, and giving them new affections and new joys, and they loved the place, and especially loved the man whom God had used in bringing it all about.

Chapter 16 Ten Years of Mighty Ministry And it begins with saying, In Spurgeon's time, London's streetlights burned gas, but still had to be lit individually. It is to this practice that Spurgeon is referring in the following note. And we have a quote here from Spurgeon in the early years.

That's the name of the work. The quote reads, Coming one Thursday in the late autumn from an engagement beyond Dulwich, my way led up to the top of the Hearn Hill Ridge. I came along the level out of which rises the steep hill I had to ascend.

While I was on the lower ground riding in a handsome cab, I saw a light before me, and when I came near the hill, I marked that light gradually go up the hill leaving a train of stars behind it. This line of new-born stars remained in the form of one lamp, and then another, and another. It reached from the foot of the hill to its summit.

I did not see the lamplighter, I do not know his name, nor his age, nor his residence, but I saw the lights which he had kindled, and these remained when he himself had gone his way. As I rode along, I thought to myself, how earnestly do I wish that my life may be spent enlightening one soul after another with the sacred flame of eternal life. I would myself be as much as possible unseen while at my work, and would vanish into eternal brilliance above when my work is done.

Again, that's from Spurgeon in the Early Years. And now begins chapter 16, again, Ten Years of Mighty Ministry. Between 1875 and 1885, Spurgeon's ministry reached heights it had never attained before.

Although the seed sown in London had already brought forth a great harvest, during these years the fruit proved still more abundant, and it came with a richness and a steadiness that was new even to a work so blessed of God as his had been. By this time, Spurgeon's preaching had changed to some extent. During his first few years in London, he had been full of physical as well as spiritual vitality, and that had been reflected in his speaking.

He had moved about on the platform with unbounded vigor, had frequently dramatized what he was saying, and had given an oratorical flourish to many an element in his discourse. His manner was very natural, and the whole was characterized by his tremendous earnestness. With the passing of the years, his style had altered.

As he had matured personally, there had come upon him a still greater determination to be able to say with Paul, We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. He had become still more concerned, lest by some oratorical gesture or some particularly striking statement, he should draw attention to himself, and should thereby cause his hearers to fail to see Christ. By 1875, in an effort to subdue the people's tendency to be conscious of him as he preached, he had taken on a more conversational style of utterance, moved around very little during the sermon, and attempted to avoid anything that could look like mere human oratory.

He prayed that as he preached, he might be hidden behind the cross, and longed that sinners should not be concerned with him, but should look upon the Savior. Nevertheless, his message was still the same, and his earnestness was perhaps greater than ever. No matter what text he chose, he always declared the great fundamental principles of the faith.

With a burning heart, he pleaded with men and women to be reconciled to God. In turn, a stronger sense of the reality of divine truth gripped men's hearts. A still larger number came to him on the Tuesday to inquire the way to Christ, or to say they had recently found him.

Most of these people also told of their experience before the church on Tuesday or Thursday evening, and were baptized on the Sunday. These constant additions gave the tabernacle a membership of more than 5,000, and made it by far the largest Baptist church in the world. Throughout this period, however, both Spurgeon and his wife were unwell much of the time.

Mrs. Spurgeon's spirit was uplifted and her health somewhat improved by her undertaking the work of the book fund. But there were times when for days or weeks she was too sick to perform her task and was reduced again to the condition of a semi-invalid. Spurgeon also was often laid low by illness.

Throughout the years that are now before us, he frequently suffered attacks of gout with their terrible pain and their attendant depression. In 1879, he experienced a physical breakdown, the result of his excessive labor and responsibility. For five months, he was absent from the tabernacle.

He was more careful of his health now than he had been formerly. Each summer, he tried to get away to Scotland for two weeks where he was the guest of a well-to-do and very earnest Christian, James Duncan of Benmore Castle. And almost every winter, he was able to spend a month or six weeks at Menton in southern France.

And those periods of release from the damp and chill of England did much toward providing the health he needed to carry on with some measure of vigor during the rest of the year. Accordingly, as we think of Spurgeon throughout this period, in fact, throughout the remaining years of his life, we must recognize that only infrequently was he in normal health, that his work was often hindered by sickness, and he knew many hours of pain. During those ten years, Spurgeon witnessed several special events.

The first was the visit to London of American evangelist D. L. Moody. In the early days of his Christian activity, Moody had been greatly inspired by Spurgeon's success and had come to England to hear him. At a later date, 1873, accompanied by his song leader, Ira D. Sankey, Moody had returned to Britain and had launched a series of evangelistic campaigns in Scotland and England.

While he was at Glasgow, Spurgeon wrote asking that when he came to London he would preach for him, and Moody's letter of reply closed with the statement, In regard to coming to your tabernacle, I consider it

a great honor to be invited, and, in fact, I should consider it an honor to black your boots, but to preach to your people would be out of the question. If they will not turn to God under your preaching, neither will they be persuaded the one rose from the dead. Yours with much love, D. L. Moody.

In 1875, Moody held an extended campaign in London. He and Sankey faced strong criticism, especially the charge of fanaticism, and Spurgeon came to their defense. In addressing a meeting of the Bible Society at which the Archbishop of Canterbury was present, he strongly denied there was anything fanatical about the ministry of the two evangelists.

And in speaking to another meeting, he stated, We are happy to have our friends here in London because somehow or other they managed to get the popular ear. Our brethren have got a grip on the masses, and they preach the gospel. We do not have it very distinct from a great many voices, but I know what Mr. Moody means when he speaks and what Mr. Sankey means when he sings.

I have never seen men carry their meaning more fully upon their lips. Moody was burdened with labor in London, and after Spurgeon had preached at one of his meetings, Moody wrote, Dear Spurgeon, Ten thousand thanks for your help last night. You gave us a great lift.

I wish you would give us every night you can for the next sixty days. There are so few men who can draw on a weeknight, and I want to keep up the meetings in the East End and the West at the same time. It is hard for me to have to speak twice the same evening.

Do all you can for the work, and we shall see blessed results. Yours in haste, D. L. Moody." In 1881, Moody returned to England, and Spurgeon, who was in Montauban at the time, wrote asking him to take Sunday at the tabernacle. Moody replied, Dear Mr. Spurgeon, Yours of the ninth is to hand, and in reply let me say that I am thankful for your very kind note.

It quite touched my heart. I have for years thought more of you than of any other man preaching the gospel on this earth, and to tell you the truth, I shrink from standing in your place. I do not know of a church in all the land that I shrink from as I do from yours, not but what your people are in sympathy with the gospel that I try to preach, but you can do it so much better than I can.

Thank you for inviting me, and D. V., I will be with your good people November 20th. Will you want Mr. Sankey, or will your own precenter have charge? Either will suit me. Remember me to your good wife, and accept my thanks for your letter of cheer.

Yours truly, D. L. Moody. These were certain points of belief on which Moody and Spurgeon were not in full agreement, but they were united on the great principles of the Christian faith. They admired one another, and each encouraged and assisted the other in every possible way.

In 1878, Spurgeon received an invitation to visit Canada. But as in the case of his invitations to America, he had received at least five of them, he had neither the time or the health to do so, and thus wrote a gracious refusal. It is to be wished that he might have been able to go to the American continent, and one can imagine him spending some days with Mr. Moody in Chicago, ministering to his congregation, and probably repeating some of his lectures to my students at the Bible Institute.

But although Spurgeon did not visit America, during the following year, 1879, his brother James spent nearly two months in the United States and Canada. He and his wife visited New York and Buffalo, and were deeply impressed with the great industrial enterprise of the people. Crossing into Canada, they

paused to view Niagara Falls, and then went on to Toronto and Montreal and several smaller cities.

James preached frequently in each country, and his ministry was somewhat highly regarded. The second special event of these years took place in 1879, the 25th anniversary of Spurgeon's ministry in London. He would have let the event pass unnoticed, but his people saw it as an opportunity to recognize his accomplishments and to express their gratitude.

Under the arrangement of the deacons, Spurgeon's two evenings were devoted to a commemoration of his labors and to praising God for his ministry. The congregation manifested their rejoicing by giving him a large sum of money, £6,476, stressing they intended he should use it for himself. But he immediately put it into the support of his institutions, and in thanking the people, he said, Some churches have one crown, some another.

Our crown under God has been this. The poor have the gospel preached unto them, souls are saved, and Christ is glorified. O my beloved church, hold fast that which thou hast.

As for me, by God's help, the first and last thing I long for is to bring men to Christ. I care nothing about fine language or about the pretty speculations of prophecy or a hundred dainty things, but to break the heart and bind it up, to lay hold on a sheep of Christ and bring it back to the fold is the one thing I would live for. Well, we have had this crowning blessing.

That is nearly as I can estimate since I came amongst you. More than 9,000 persons have joined this church. If they were all alive now or all with us now, what a company that would be! What I have done I shall do still, namely, love you with all my heart and love my Lord as his grace enables me.

I mean to go on preaching Jesus and his gospel, and you may be sure I shall not preach anything else, for with me it is Christ or nothing. I am sold up, and my stock in trade is gone if Jesus Christ is gone. He is the sum of my ministry, my all in all." The words about having nothing if he had not Christ were undoubtedly prompted by the unbelief that was then finding its way into numerous pulpits.

Before many years had passed, Spurgeon was to find it necessary to take a stand, defending the great truths of the Scripture. His attitude in contending was that those who did not believe in the deity of Christ had abandoned Christianity and had nothing whatsoever of it left. The following year, 1880, saw a major change in the daily life of the Spurgeons.

They moved to another house. People had long told Spurgeon that because of his rheumatic condition and his wife's ill health, he ought to live outside the city and on higher ground to escape the damp and fogs of London. Moreover, the Nightingale Lane area in which they had lived for twenty-three years had become largely commercial in nature.

Although that lessened the pleasure of living there, it also increased the value of the property. As he considered the advisability of relocating, Spurgeon found himself attracted by a for-sale sign on a suburban estate south of London and situated on a height of land called Beulah Hill. When a friend suggested it would be an ideal home for him and Mrs. Spurgeon, he immediately replied it was too grand a place for him to even think of.

But at that very time, a developer expressed a desire to buy the Nightingale Lane property and offered an excellent price. The amount was almost sufficient to cover the entire cost of the Beulah Hill estate, and believing the Lord had opened the way, Spurgeon purchased it. The new property, which was nine acres

in extent, bore the name Westwood.

It had several mature trees and an abundance of flowers and shrubs, together with a garden, stables, and pasture. The house was a typical Victorian gentleman's home. Spurgeon immediately used the drawing room as his library and the billiard room with its large window as his study.

The surrounding area was quiet and peaceful, with a fine view to the south over the fields of Thornton Heath, and the place afforded the weary man during whatever hours he was able to spend there a sense of pleasant relaxation. Of course, some people made loud complaint. Exaggerated descriptions of the house and the grounds were circulated, and it was said Spurgeon lived in a home fit for a prince.

There was a small scenic pond on the property, but it was spoken of as a fine lake, and an American minister, after visiting London, likened the estate to that of Buckingham Palace. Under the Spurgeon's ownership, however, Westwood was not only a home, it also became a place of much business. Each morning two secretaries arrived, and the one, J. L. Keyes, began opening the mail, a great pile of which awaited him every day.

Some letters he answered himself, but many he set aside for Spurgeon's personal attention. The other secretary, J. W. Harold, performed numerous duties in connection with Spurgeon's literary endeavors, made arrangements regarding his travels, and decided whether persons who called, wanting to see Spurgeon, should be allowed to take up his time. Here, every Monday, the work of preparing the sermon for the printer was done, always an exacting task.

And here, too, the sword and the trowel was edited each month, a duty which meant that the assistant editor, G. Holden Pike, spent many a day in the study at Westwood. The book fund also operated from Westwood, and Mrs. Spurgeon had a room that overflowed with books, and there was much activity on her part in answering letters, while her helpers worked at parceling and mailing bundles to needy pastors. And above all, this was the scene of Spurgeon's manifold labors.

His library contained twelve thousand volumes, and every month he reviewed ten or twelve new ones for his paper. Besides the numerous books that he wrote, he penned around five hundred letters every week. When we remember those were written by hand and with a pen that had to be constantly dipped into an ink bottle, we can understand something of the labor involved.

Undoubtedly, had the telephone been available in that day, he would have made abundant use of it. It would have spared him the labor of many of the little notes he wrote in making arrangements for his visits to other churches, for the work of his institutions, and the printing of his writings. But it would have necessitated a full-time switchboard operator who would have had the responsibility of dealing with the innumerable callers and deciding whether or not to put them through to him.

Westwood was truly a fine place, but it also served a grand use. It was Spurgeon's home throughout the rest of his earthly journey. It made his burdens a little less heavy to bear, and it allowed him to perform many tasks that otherwise would not have been possible.

The fourth special event that marked the lives of Spurgeon and his wife during these years was a celebration of their silver wedding anniversary. It actually fell on January 8, 1881. Spurgeon was too ill at the time to go to the tabernacle, as the deacons hoped, and therefore the planning for this event, which was to have been held there on a Monday evening, was dropped.

But the deacons and a few close friends spent the evening in happy fellowship with the Spurgeons at Westwood. The other event we must take notice took place three years later. This was Spurgeon's 50th birthday, which fell on June 19, 1884, and which the people called his jubilee.

At the time the year opened, Spurgeon was in Menton. He was too ill to return to England at the date he had intended, and on January 10 he wrote to his people, saying, quote, Dear friends, I am altogether stranded. I am not able to leave my bed or to find much rest upon it.

The pains of rheumatism, lumbago, and sciatica mingled together are exceedingly sharp. If I happen to turn a little to the right hand or to the left, I am soon aware that I am dwelling in a body capable of the most acute suffering. In another two weeks he came home, took a Sunday's services at the tabernacle, and then was prostrated once more.

This time he wrote, Literally, my trouble is to get on my feet again. I am a poor creature. Evidently I am in the extreme of physical weakness.

Nevertheless, the Lord can cause His spiritual power to be shown in me, and I believe He will. Your great love will bear with me, and I shall be on the front again, bearing witness to the faithfulness of the Lord. He gradually recuperated and was able to return to his ministry.

By June he was ready to take part in the Jubilee celebration. Throughout the afternoon of the 19th, he sat in his vestry and greeted the numerous people who called. In the evening the tabernacle was filled for a meeting at which, on behalf of the church, the deacons expressed their thanks to God for Spurgeon and his ministry.

Brief greetings were brought by a number of ministers, among them Spurgeon's father, his brother James, and his son Charles. A particular joy arose from the fact that Mrs. Spurgeon was present. After being absent for some years, she was now sufficiently improved in health to attend this historic gathering, to the great delight of her husband and of the people.

Mr. Moody also spoke that evening, and we notice his address in part. Quote, Mr. Spurgeon has said tonight that he had felt like weeping. I have tried to keep back the tears, but I have not succeeded very well.

Twenty-five years ago, after I was converted, I began to read of a young man preaching in London with great power, and a desire seized me to hear him, never expecting that someday I should myself be a preacher. Everything I could get a hold of in print that he ever said, I read. In 1867 I made my way across the sea, and if there ever was a seasick man for fourteen days, I was that one.

The first place to which I came was this building. I was told I could not get in without a ticket, but I made up my mind to get in somehow, and I succeeded. I well remember seating myself in this gallery.

I recollect the very seat, and I should take it back to America with me. As your dear pastor walked down to the platform, my eyes just feasted upon him. It happened to be the year he preached in the Agricultural Hall.

I followed him up there, and he sent me back to America a better man. While I was here, I followed Mr. Spurgeon everywhere, and when at home people asked me if I had gone to this and that cathedral, I had to say, No, and confess I was ignorant of them, but I could tell them something about the meetings

addressed by Mr. Spurgeon. In 1872 I thought I would come over again to learn a little more, and I found my way back to this gallery.

I have been here a great many times since, and never come into this building without getting a blessing to my soul. I think I have had as great a one here tonight as at any other time. When I look down on these orphan boys, when I think of the 600 servants of God who have gone out from the college, of the 1,500 or 2,000 sermons from this pulpit which are in print, and of the multitude of books that have come from the pastor's pen, I would fain enlarge upon these good works.

But let me just say this. If God can use Mr. Spurgeon, why should he not use the rest of us? And why should we not all just lay ourselves at the master's feet and say to him, Send me, use me. Mr. Spurgeon, God bless you.

I know that you love me, but I assure you that I love you a thousand times more than you can ever love me, because you have been such a blessing to me. We may never meet again in the flesh, but by the blessing of God, I will meet you up yonder. Spurgeon's regular work went on with steady pace, and everywhere met with still greater success.

Everything grows and demands more and more attention, he declared in reference to the tabernacle and its institutions. One biographer tells us, The spiritual work of the church was never more prosperous. In the last month of 1880, over a hundred persons were received into church fellowship.

And of one occasion during this time, Spurgeon reported, I sat from two till seven seeing inquiries desirous of entering the church, and I saw thirty-three of them without resting. I never had a more joyous time. At his suggestion, two hundred and fifty members left the tabernacle to begin a new church at Peckham.

Several other instances of this starting of new causes by tabernacle people took place. The pastor was always pleased when such a battalion left the main army to carry on operations elsewhere. Despite his rheumatic condition, Spurgeon did a great deal of preaching besides at the tabernacle.

One time in Leeds, well to the north in England, it was reported that hundreds were unable to obtain admission. The announcement of Mr. Spurgeon's intention to preach evinced his continued popularity by attracting hundreds from many miles distant. Of a meeting he addressed at Bristol, we read, The admission was of course by ticket, but the crowd at one time rushed past the police at the entrance and gained admittance.

The desire to procure tickets was scarcely comprehensible to those who did not understand the preacher's unique popularity. It was even said that ten pounds had been offered for a seat. Those are but two of numerous reports of Spurgeon's itinerant ministry during these years.

Judged by today's standards, travel by either train or horse and carriage was slow and uncomfortable, and as one reads G. Holden Pike's reports of Spurgeon's very frequent visits to other cities, it is impossible not to wonder at so widespread a ministry on the part of a rheumatic man. Even when he went on his summer vacation to Scotland, he could not refrain from preaching, and it was not unusual for him to preach to 10,000 and 15,000 in the open air on a Scottish hillside. As we have seen, Spurgeon had received five invitations to visit America and one to visit Canada.

Another reached him from Australia, and as in the former instances, he had to refuse. "'How I wish I could glide over and return in a month,' he wrote, and his words seemed to anticipate the liberty men have

achieved today in the privilege of flight. By November of each year, Spurgeon was worn out and had no choice but to get away to Montaigne.

One year before leaving, he became so weak in the midst of his sermon that he had to pause and ask the congregation to sing a hymn while he recovered. He then continued the preaching, but he did so with difficulty, and on the morrow, the rumor spread around London that he was dying. It was false, but he was terribly unwell, and in another day's time he set out on his trip to the South.

The work of the men from the college also experienced unusual blessing during these years. The men very largely followed Spurgeon's method of making sure, as far as was humanly possible, that anyone they baptized had truly been born again. Yet, in the twelve years preceding 1880, the number of persons they had baptized amounted to some 39,000.

Thus, churches were built and increased everywhere throughout the land. Two of the college men, Clark and Smith, were evangelists, and Spurgeon reported that in one year they conducted 1,100 services. Another year, this team undertook the work of the tabernacle during Spurgeon's six weeks at Montaigne, and when he returned, there were nearly 400 persons who had professed conversion during his absence, waiting to be baptized.

Lord Shaftesbury was the chairman of the meeting that commemorated Spurgeon's fiftieth birthday, and after listening to the list of the sixty-six organizations that Spurgeon conducted, he remarked, He has not been puffed up by success, but humbled, and animated the more to go on in his noble career of good for the benefit of mankind. I want to tell you what we outsiders think. What a tale of his agencies was read to you just now, how it showed what a powerful administrative mind our friend has.

That list of associations instituted by his genius and superintended by his care were more than enough to occupy the minds and hearts of fifty ordinary men. It seems to me to be the whole world in a nutshell. He carries on his orphanage and various other institutions, and I would impress upon you that in which I think he shines the brightest, in the foundation and government of the pastor's college.

My worthy friend has produced a large number of men, useful in their generation, to preach the word of God in all its simplicity and force. No man has produced such a body capable and willing to carry on the noble work as our friend, whose jubilee was celebrated today. And a London newspaper, conscious of the constantly increasing nature of Spurgeon's work, remarked, Other men have had vicissitudes reverses disasters.

Mr. Spurgeon's only vicissitudes have arisen from his continually increasing influence. He has had anxiety, no doubt, as other men, but it has only been the anxiety of growth, never of decline. Despite the health of the tabernacle and its institutions, Spurgeon's illness was keeping him out of the pulpit many Sundays of the year.

When he expressed his regret to the deacons and spoke disparagingly of his long absence in Montaigne each winter, they declared their deep gratitude for whatever portion of the year he was able to give them. We would rather have you for merely six months than anyone else for the entire twelve. It was a good testimony to his ability, their appreciation, and the prosperity of the work.

We'll just jump into chapter 17 today. It's entitled Personal Characteristics. We're going to learn about some of the deeply personal traits of the man in the reading of this chapter.

It begins with a quote from *The Prince of Preachers*, written in 1894 by James Douglas. Charles Haddon Spurgeon was in no respect ordinary. He was great as a man, great as a theologian, great as a preacher, great in private with God, and great in public with his fellow men.

He was well versed in the three things which, according to Luther, make a minister, temptation, meditation, and prayer. The school of suffering was one in which he was deeply taught. And that's the quote.

Let's begin the chapter now. Chapter 17, again entitled *Personal Characteristics*. So pronounced a personality as C. H. Spurgeon could not but be marked by several features of thought and action that distinguished him from other men.

We must look at those features for by knowing them we shall have a better understanding of our great subject. The chief element of Spurgeon's entire career was his walk with God. Among evangelicals, such Christians as David Brainerd, Henry Martin, John Fletcher, and Robert Murray McShane are remembered for the holiness of their lives.

Spurgeon fully merits a place among such holy men. We recall, for instance, the declaration of his dedication to the Lord which he wrote shortly after his conversion. It asserted his glad yielding of himself to God.

And in a diary that followed, he recorded the manner in which he carried out that purpose. It is impossible to read his words without seeing the beauty of that young life in its purity and its selfless devotion. The same principles motivated him when he came to London.

Amidst a success so great that it would have driven many a man to unbounded pride, he remained humble and was often utterly broken before the Lord. He taught his people to pray, doing so far more by his own example than by any preaching he did on the subject. People heard him pray with such reality that they became ashamed of their own mere repetition of words, and gradually, overcoming the practice, they began to wrestle with God in fervent fellowship, as he did.

Spurgeon was ever a man of prayer. Not that he spent any long periods of time in prayer, but he lived in the spirit of communion with God. An American, Dr. Wayland Hoyt, provides an example of his practice.

Quote, I was walking with him in the woods one day just outside London, and as we strolled under the shadow of the summer foliage, we came upon a log lying athwart the path. Come, he said, as naturally as one would say if he were hungry and bread was put before him, come, let us pray. Kneeling beside the log, he lifted his soul to God in the most loving and yet reverent prayer.

Then, rising from his knees, he went strolling on, talking about this and that. The prayer was no parenthesis interjected. It was something that belonged as much to the habit of his mind as breathing did to the habit of his body.

Another American, Dr. Theodore Kyler, tells of a similar incident. As he and Spurgeon walked one day in the woods, conversing in high spirits, suddenly Spurgeon stopped and said, Come, Theodore, let us thank God for laughter. That was how he lived.

From a jest to a prayer meant with him the breadth of a straw. William Williams, who after his course at the pastor's college became a successful minister, was often in Spurgeon's company. He says, One of the most helpful hours of my visits to Westwood was the hour of family prayer.

At six o'clock, all the household gathered into the study for worship. Usually, Mr. Spurgeon would himself lead the devotions. The portion read was invariably accompanied with exposition.

How amazingly helpful those homely and gracious comments were. I remember especially his reading of the 24th of Luke. Jesus himself drew near and went with them.

How sweetly he talked upon having Jesus with us wherever we go. Not only to have him drawn near at special seasons, but to go with us whatever labor we undertake. Then, how full of tender pleading, of serene confidence in God, of world-embracing sympathy were his prayers.

With what gracious familiarity he could talk with his Divine Master. Yet, what reverence ever marked his address to his Lord. His public prayers were an inspiration and benediction, but his prayers with the family were to me more wonderful still.

The beauty of them was ever striking. Figures, symbols, citations of choice, scriptural emblems, all given with a spontaneity and naturalness that charmed the mind and moved the heart. Mr. Spurgeon, when bowed before God in family prayer, appeared a grander man even then when holding thousands spellbound by his oratory.

Such words make us realize what a magnificent experience it must have been to hear Spurgeon pray. The man who lived in this constant fellowship with God manifested in his daily life all the fruits of the Spirit. Here, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control were ever present, and with them there was a hatred of their opposites, a loathing of every form of sin.

This picture of Spurgeon as a man of unusual holiness is entirely true. Accordingly, the statement we must now make will to many seem inconsistent. Nevertheless, it also is true, and we must make it.

It is that Spurgeon both smoked cigars and drank alcoholic beverages. When his smoking began is not known, but in Spurgeon's time the practice was believed to be beneficial to one's health. Robert Hall, the famous preacher of the St. Andrews Street Baptist Church, Cambridge, had been ordered by his physician to become a smoker, and since Spurgeon lived at Cambridge and attended that church in his teens, he was undoubtedly familiar with this event.

Moreover, there were no qualms whatsoever about the practice in the minds of many ministers in the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, and in the churches of France and Holland. Of course, Spurgeon made not the slightest attempt to hide his practice. One press reporter described him as he drove to the tabernacle each morning, and his account closed with the words, Enjoying his morning cigar.

While out on a jaunt with the students one morning, when several of them had lighted pipes or cigars, Spurgeon said, Aren't you ashamed to be smoking so early? And they immediately put out their fire. Then he produced a cigar and lit it, and both he and they laughed at his little joke, but his point was that he was in no way ashamed of the practice. It must be emphasized, he saw nothing wrong in his smoking in that he did it openly.

But, he received a sudden shock. In 1874, Dr. George F. Pentecost, a Baptist pastor from America, visited the tabernacle, and Spurgeon had him sit on the platform for the evening service. Spurgeon preached strongly and plainly upon the necessity of giving up sin in order to success in prayer, and he spoke against the seemingly unimportant little habits many Christians practice that keep them from true fellowship with God.

After concluding his sermon, he asked Dr. Pentecost to speak, suggesting especially that he apply the principle he himself had declared. It is probable Dr. Pentecost did not know that Spurgeon smoked. At any rate, he applied Spurgeon's principle by telling of his own experience in giving up cigars.

He said, One thing I liked exceedingly, the best cigar that could be bought, yet he felt the habit was wrong in the life of a Christian, and he strove to overcome it. The habit, however, proved so strong that he found himself enslaved till after much struggling, he took his cigar box before the Lord, cried desperately for help, and was given a complete victory. He told, with much praise to God, how he had been enabled to defeat the habit.

Throughout his words ran the idea that smoking was not only an enslaving habit, but that the Christian must look on it as a sin. We must assume that if ever in his lifetime Spurgeon was embarrassed, it was now. He arose and stated, Well, dear friends, you know that some men can do to the glory of God what to other men would be a sin, and not withstanding what Brother Pentecost has said, I intend to smoke a good cigar to the glory of God before I go to bed tonight.

If anybody can show me in the Bible the command, Thou shalt not smoke, I am ready to keep it, but I haven't found it yet. I find ten commandments, and it is as much as I can do to keep them, and I have no desire to make them eleven or twelve. The fact is I have been speaking to you about real sin, and not about listening to mere quibbles and scruples.

Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, and that is the real point of what my Brother Pentecost has been saying. Why, a man may think it a sin to have his boots blacked. Well, then let him give it up and have them whitewashed.

I wish to say I am not ashamed of anything, whatever that I do, and I don't feel that smoking makes me ashamed, and therefore I mean to smoke to the glory of God. In no time the statement a cigar to the glory of God spread across England. The press carried the news and received a host of letters, some condoning Spurgeon's practice, but most condemning it.

He had no choice but to attempt to defend himself, and in a letter to the Daily Telegraph he declared, Together with hundreds of thousands of my fellow Christians I have smoked, and with them I am under the condemnation of living in habitual sin, if certain accusers are to be believed. As I would not knowingly live even in the smallest violation of the law of God, and sin is the transgression of the law, I will not own to sin when I am not conscious of it. When I have found intense pain relieved, a weary brain soothed, and calm, refreshing sleep obtained by a cigar, I have felt grateful to God, and have blessed his name.

That is what I meant." Among the several pronouncements on the subject the most important was a lengthy open letter addressed to Mr. Spurgeon and published in pamphlet form. Its manner was calm and its reasoning strong. It told him he was doing himself not physical good, but physical harm by smoking.

It reminded him of the example he was setting and mentioned the effort of Christian parents to keep their youths from the practice, only to be told Spurgeon smokes! William Williams tells us that in later years Spurgeon partially desisted from his smoking, sometimes going for months without a cigar. It is possible that this was an effort to prove to himself and others that he was not enslaved by the habit. About two years before his death he appears to have given up smoking completely, perhaps having by then realized it was not the help to his health that he had expected.

Nevertheless, many of us today cannot but wish he had never undertaken the practice. During a considerable portion of his life Spurgeon also used alcoholic drinks as a beverage. In his day, pure drinking water was difficult to obtain and in order to avoid contamination most people used beer and ale at their meals.

This had been a human custom since time immemorial and there can be little doubt that Spurgeon had been introduced to it as a boy in the homes of his grandfather and his father, and that he had grown up accustomed to the practice. In turn, he had not long been in London when we find him using such drinks as beer, wine, and brandy, though in very moderate amounts. And this practice, like that of smoking, he did not in any way attempt to deny or to hide.

In 1863 the American temperance orator John B. Goff was in England and he published some strong statements against Spurgeon's use of alcohol. It appears that he exaggerated the extent of Spurgeon's practice, and Spurgeon asserted in an article in American Magazine quote, I had always honored Mr. Goff as a great and good man. I had supposed also that he was a gentleman and better still a Christian who esteemed the cause of religion even more highly than that of teetotalism.

End quote. In 1871 Goff was in England again and now he learned much better things about Spurgeon. He learned he no longer used alcohol.

And after calling on him in his home Goff wrote, I am glad to be able to say that I know he is at present and has been for some time a total abstainer and that when he took stimulants it was by his physician's prescription. When he took it he made no secret of his course but freely spoke of it wherever he might be. It is possible that Goff was somewhat mistaken as to the date of Spurgeon's change of habit but several of the students of the college were strong opponents of all use of alcohol.

Spurgeon's two sons were also abstainers and it is probable their stand was influential upon their father. During the 1870's Spurgeon dropped the practice and in later years he had Mr. Goff lecture at the tabernacle against alcohol and in favor of abstinence. In these two practices we see that Mr. Spurgeon was very human a man of his times.

Moreover he was not alone in the indulgence. For instance though John Wesley totally opposed the drinking of tea hence the term tea totaler he was something of an authority on the taste of ale. Charles Wesley also indulged and the picture seems rather incongruous when we see the grand old Methodist warrior during the last years of his life listing his expenditures for drinks for the guests attending his son's musical concerts.

Whitfield's practice was similar. We find him writing Give my thanks to that friendly brewer for the keg of rum he sent us. I reported these matters regarding Spurgeon with much reluctance.

They seem sadly regrettable in the life of so righteous a man. Yet in the name of either Christian honesty or scholarly accuracy they could not be omitted. There are however many further items of a very different and very worthy nature to be reported about Spurgeon and we continue to consider them.

We first notice his physical person. He had nothing of the tall stately elegance of Edward Irving which many Londoners then remembered but was of medium height and not of an attractive build. His body was short in the upper leg but he possessed an orator's powerful chest.

His head was large and it was said there were no angles about him. In his early thirties he began to grow a beard which basically improved his appearance. It also protected him from the dampness and chill of England's winters and above all it saved him the time formerly spent in shaving.

His face was highly expressive. The features were of themselves somewhat heavy but were ever lightened by the eyes around which even in his times of pain a smile seemed unfailingly to glow. An artist once undertook to paint his portrait but after four sittings he gave it up saying, I can't paint you.

Your face is different every day. You are never the same. A description of Spurgeon was made by one who knew him well, James Douglas.

Could any face more fully express geniality, friendliness, warmth of affection and overflowing hospitality? We know of none in whom these traits so shine forth. His greeting was warm as sunshine. It mattered not what might be the shadow on the spirit or the trouble of the heart.

It all vanished away at the voice of his welcome. There was light on his countenance that instantly dispersed all gloom. I have never known one whose presence had such charm or whose conversation was such a rich and varied feast.

His voice stamped him as preeminent, being an organ in itself of amazing compass and sweetness of modulation. His speech was music. He was a born speaker, both as to the quality of note and the ease of utterance.

He needed no training in elocution, for he had it in him. Nor was his discourse ever verbiage, or a mere melodious sound in the air. The born orator, as in Edward Irving's case, often lays himself open to this charge.

Mr. Spurgeon's diction was never high-sounding or bombastic. With the grandeur of his theme, he soared. The transcendent never became small in his hands.

If the thought was sublime, he would give it sublime expression. If homely, he bedecked it accordingly. His intellect was an equal associate of his great heart.

The brain of his truly great man was of a giant order. He did with ease and spontaneously mental feats which men of name and inordinate vanity struggle in vain, even by elaboration, to accomplish. He could grasp the bearings of a subject, hold his theme well in hand, and deploy his thoughts like troops in tactical movements.

He was never at sea. All was orderly arrangement." Spurgeon always had a love for animals. Though during his first years in London he used a one-horse carriage, after he moved to Westwood, having further to drive to the tabernacle, he changed to a two-horse conveyance.

The horses were kept in excellent condition, and he jokingly spoke of them as under the law they rested each Saturday. Some of the strongest statements one will find anywhere in all his works are in an article he wrote against cruelty to animals, as with fierce vehemence he cited one instance after another of terrible treatment of horses and dogs that had come to his attention. He kept a hive of bees at Westwood, and took delight in caring for them himself when he had the time.

He was fascinated with the system of life the bees used in the hive. On one occasion a great number lighted on him, but he ran into the house and removed the outer clothes without receiving a single sting. After a thief broke into his house and stole a gold-headed walking cane that John B. Goff had given him, Spurgeon obtained a dog.

But it was not a watchdog, merely a little one of the pug variety, and it had the affection of Mrs. Spurgeon and himself. There were goldfish in the pond at Westwood, and it was said they would swim to him and wait to be stroked when he came to the edge of the water. Nevertheless, we may be sure he brought something they liked to eat, and that that was their special attraction.

During the last twenty years or so of his life, Spurgeon tried to use Wednesday as his day of freedom from work, and there were times he took a holiday that lasted half the week. On those occasions, whether the day one or four, he would take as his companion one of the young pastors who had been a student of his college, or perhaps a fellow minister, sometimes one of the American pastors who was visiting London. Dressed in some carefree togs, he would drive his horse and carriage and set out on quiet country roads to the south of London, stopping at some picturesque inn for lunch, or for overnight accommodation.

At times they left the horse in the stable at the inn, and walked in the woods, or found some secluded spot in which to sit, and behold the divine handiwork in nature all around them. On these jaunts, Spurgeon put away the thoughts of his burden of responsibility, and was the soul of merriment. He talked about the history of villages or buildings in the area.

He knew plants and flowers by their names in both English and Latin, and indeed could converse on all manner of subjects with accuracy and enjoyment. The Archbishop of Canterbury had a large estate in this part of England, and he asked Spurgeon to make use of it just as if it were his own. And when the outing was over, his companions usually regarded the event as one of the grand occasions of their lives, and spoke of him as the most charming and fascinating host.

We cannot adequately know Spurgeon unless we recognize also his strong sensitivity. Although he was a rugged and distinctively masculine individual, he was also very tender, and was easily moved to tears. His whole person was alive to the various experiences of life, and he felt things deeply.

For instance, we are told that there were two occasions on which he was so disturbed in his spirit that he prayed all night. One of those was so sacred that it was not further mentioned. But the other was the time when his son Tom was about to sail to Australia and take up a new life in that warmer climate.

Spurgeon had hoped that as he aged he would increasingly have the help of his two sons, but now Tom was leaving, and was going so far away, and he felt he would never see him again. He preached that Sunday evening on Hannah, a woman of sorrowful spirit, and during the hours that followed, he wrestled with God, and before the morning dawned, he had calmly submitted to his son's departure. Another element of his sensitivity lay in his fear of crossing a road when the traffic was heavy.

In that day, the streets of London were full of horses and carts and carriages, some drivers urging their steeds onward as speedily as possible and with no rules of the road to control them. On one occasion, amidst this hustle and bustle, Spurgeon stood on a corner near the Bank of England and could not summon enough courage to cross the road. But a blind man approached and asked that he help him make his way through the stream of moving traffic, and in view of the blind man's need, Spurgeon responded, and the two of them crossed in safety.

Spurgeon experienced severe depressions, and although those were to some extent the result of the gout, there probably was also another reason. All manner of persons came to him to pour into his ear the tale of their trials and to seek his advice. This was true of hundreds of the Tabernacle people, but was especially true of the men of the college who had gone out into the ministry.

There were problems in their churches to be met and decisions to be made, and they came first to unburden themselves to him, and then to have him pray for them and assist them with his wise counsel. One of the best of the college men, James Douglas, said that he saw Mr. Spurgeon so often bearing other men's burdens in this way that he determined never to bring him any trial of his own, but that when he came to him it would be with some account of blessing that would raise his spirits. But although he thus heard the troubles of numerous others, Spurgeon had no one to whom he could tell his own.

In view of Mrs. Spurgeon's frequent sickness, he undoubtedly did not tell her the full tale of the load he bore. There was the great machine he had created, the Tabernacle, and its associated organizations to be maintained, all at tremendous cost. The deacons and elders shouldered their measure of responsibility, yet so much depended on him that in many senses he bore the great load alone.

Truly he trusted the Lord, yet he also felt the strain of his burdens, and having no one to whom he could fully unburden himself, he built up a sense of trial within his breast, and gradually bore him down into severe depression. What he suffered in these times of darkness we may not know. They usually accompanied his days and nights of physical agony under the strength of a gout attack, and even his desperate calling upon God often brought him no relief.

There are dungeons, he said, beneath the Castle of Despair, and he had often been in them. Those terrible experiences had their good effect upon his ministry, however. In his audiences each Sunday sat hundreds of persons who had come from a week of trial and who needed kindness and encouragement, and here was the man who could give it.

His voice was often broken with his feeling for the sorrowing. Many a time he was in excruciating pain as he preached. He knew what suffering was, and his words were full of sympathy that lifted spirits, and sent tried men and women forth to face their circumstances with new strength.

In spite of the depression, Spurgeon was basically a very happy man. William Williams was often in his company, and he wrote, quote, What a bubbling fountain of humor Mr. Spurgeon had. I have laughed more, I verily believe, when in his company than during all the rest of my life besides.

He had the most fascinating gift of laughter, and he had also the greatest ability for making all who heard him laugh with him. When someone blamed him for saying humorous things in his sermons, he said, He would not blame me if he knew only how many of them I had to keep track. End quote.

The following passage from his lectures gives us insight into Spurgeon's behavior when under depression. Quote, Gentlemen, there are many passages of Scripture which you will never understand thoroughly until some trying or singular experience shall interpret them to you. The other evening, I was riding home after a heavy day's work.

I felt wearied and sore depressed when swiftly and suddenly that text came to me, My grace is sufficient for thee. I reached home and looked it up in the original, and at last it came to me in this way, My grace is sufficient for thee. And I said, I should think it is, Lord.

And I burst out laughing. I never understood what the holy laughter of Abraham was till then. It seemed to make unbelief so absurd.

O brethren, be great believers. Little faith will bring your souls to heaven, but great faith will bring heaven to your souls. End quote.

And now chapter 18, Spurgeon as an author. And it begins with a quote from Spurgeon himself. This was written in 1855.

How many souls may be converted by what some men are privileged to write and print? There is, for instance, Dr. Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul. I could wish that everybody had read that book. So many have been the conversions it has produced.

I think it's more honor to have composed Watt's Psalms and Hymns than Milton's Paradise Lost. And more glory to have written old Thomas Wilcox's book A Choice Drop of Honey from the Rock, Christ. Or the booklet God has used so much, The Sinner's Friend.

Then all the works of Homer. I value books for the good they may do, much as I respect the genius of Pope, or Dryden, or Burns. Give me the simple lines of Cowper that God has owned in bringing souls to him.

Oh, to think that I may write and print books which shall reach poor sinners' hearts. And again, that was written in 1855. Now chapter 18, Spurgeon as an author.

From the time of his boyhood, Spurgeon manifested a desire to put his thoughts on paper and have others read them. When he was only twelve, he produced what he called the Juvenile Magazine, a few small handwritten sheets that he circulated among his sisters and his brother. It contained news of a weekly prayer meeting that he conducted, and it offered advertising space at the rate of three lines for half a penny.

Though it was but a childish endeavor, it showed the attraction he felt toward the work of publishing. At the age of fifteen, he wrote an essay, 295 pages in length, entitled, Popery Unmasked. He submitted it in a contest, and although it did not win the prize, in recognition of its high quality, one of the sponsors awarded him a gift of one pound.

When he reached the age of seventeen and had become a pastor, his writing broke into print for the very first time. He produced a few brief articles to present the way of salvation, and those were published as The Water Beach Tracts. Then some further short items from his pen were accepted by The Baptist Reporter.

Those early endeavors, however, were but a foretaste of the great work of publishing that lay before him. Spurgeon had been in London only six months when one of his sermons was published in The Penny Pulpit. This was so well received that The Baptist Messenger published one also, and The Penny Pulpit published three or four more.

The response made it evident that there was a large possible readership for the discourses of the rising young preacher. One of the deacons of the New Park Street Chapel was especially interested in this development. This was Joseph Passmore, who with a partner, James Alabaster, had recently opened a printing business.

Mr. Passmore was an earnest Christian and an enterprising businessman, and he suggested that Spurgeon allow him to publish one of his sermons every week. Spurgeon was then in the midst of his great burst of fame, and he dreaded the thought of being projected still further into prominence. Nevertheless, he recognized the published sermon might well be used of God in the salvation of souls, and therefore he consented.

Moreover, besides this weekly production, each January the 52 sermons published during the preceding year were reprinted. They were bound together as a single volume, *The New Park Street Pulpit*. By the time this first volume appeared, January 1855, Spurgeon had already published his first two books, *The Saint and His Savior*, and *Smooth Stones Taken from Ancient Brooks*.

And he intended to continue the weekly and yearly publication of the sermons and also to produce further books. He was warned against doing so by a very worthy friend, Dr. John Campbell. Dr. Campbell had retired from the pastorate of the Whitfield Tabernacle and had become the editor of a religious paper, *The British Banner*.

He was a well-

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